

March 10, 2023

To: Honorable Co-Chairs Fonfara and Horn, Ranking Members Martin and Cheeseman, and Esteemed Colleagues

From: Mary Ann Turner
Enfield, CT 860-306-2023 maryannturner@cox.net

Subject: Bill No. HB 5290. An Act Sunsetting the Highway Use Tax

When I signed up to speak on bill HB5290 I checked the wrong box. I am here today to “support” the removal/sunsetting of the highway tax bill.

We all say we want to help the business owners – stay in business – in CT. We want to make CT a better place to do business and grow. We want our residents to have good paying jobs and live and raise their children in our state.

But for some reason the majority legislature also wants -- living, working and thriving in CT to be difficult. It may be an ‘unintended consequence’.

Today you will hear why this bill needs to be repealed – costs to the truck businesses – in and out of CT have been incumbered with a heavy, unnecessary burden – this tax takes away from those businesses thriving, providing good paying jobs and/or expanding in our state – and making a “buck” is not a dirty word.

The highway tax is pushed down to the end user – for goods and services because in the end the only revenue stream paying the proposed taxes is the person purchasing the goods that is you and me.

Businesses don’t have a way to make up “new revenue streams” like the legislature. Businesses must live within the framework of their business model. The “market” decides for them – if they thrive or die.

It is disingenuous for the majority of the legislature to claim – on one hand – they want to ease the burden of CT residents – but on the other – with a highway use tax they want to burden the same group.

The Special Transportation fund was instated for just that reason – to focus on upgrading our roads and bridges, but the majority legislature diverted dollars for other departments (motor vehicles and subsidies to bus and rail) was that right? Did the road and bridge work get done or is it getting done?

Every legislative cycle more bills are developed, and more taxes are conjured up.

Bottom line, the majority legislature is putting more pressure on businesses and that puts pressure on the end user (us).

The state must find a way to get construction projects up and running to justify the revenues being pulled into the line item. The majority legislature needs to find a balance and stop taking the “easy way out” – taxes, fees, licenses.

Remove the highway use tax it is an overreach. We must not burden one group on the back of another.